

# Climate sorrow or climate shame? Climate compounds as part of a social positioning in Danish media

KIRSTINE BOAS AND TINA THODE HOUGAARD

Since 2018, the coverage of climate news has risen in the Danish media coverage. The use of compounds with *climate* as the first word follows the same pattern. We suggest calling these *climate compounds*. In this paper, we identify the most used climate compounds, and we categorise them: *positive actions*, *discursive battle between activism and scepticism* and, lastly, *psychologizing feelings and thoughts about the climate*. The latter proves interesting, as new compounds have emerged recently here. Examples of these are *climate sorrow* and *climate shame*. We find that the use of *climate worries* decreases while *climate anxiety* takes over. Close readings of these compounds show that *climate sorrow* is used to position oneself as being in a state of hopelessness on behalf of the climate and in an opposition to those who rely on hope to save the earth. We show that *climate shame* is used by groups who recognize the feeling and by those who don't (contrary to *climate sorrow*, which is only used by those who feel it). This analysis thus shows that climate compounds can be locally interpreted to align with one's own experience and understanding of the seriousness of climate change.

**KEYWORDS:** climate discourse; media; mental health; compound